

APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR RECORDING CONSUMED DOSAGES

[0001] Apparatus and method for monitoring ingestible products consumed are generally discussed herein with specific discussions involving the utilization and employment of indicia on medicine containers and packages for recording consumed products.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Ingestible products, such as medications, vitamins, and supplements, generally require strict adherence as to dosage and frequency of consumption. Among other things, incorrectly consuming an ingestible product can lead to over consumption or under consumption, which, can in turn, lead to adverse reactions, further deterioration, and in extreme cases even death.

[0003] Due to a busy schedule, inattentiveness, preoccupation, sick, diseased, or a host of other reasons, keeping track of ingestible products consumed and the dosages consumed can be challenging. This situation is exacerbated when multiple ingestible products are taken or when caring for multiple patients or dependents requiring multiple ingestible products.

[0004] Relying on one's memory to keep tabs of products consumed is often the method of choice. Information stored on the memory tabs may include information such as the time a particular product was consumed, the dosage consumed, and the type of product consumed. If more than one type of ingestible products are consumed (such as head ache medication and flu medication), the amount information stored on the memory tabs grows proportionately larger, thus posing a greater potential for forgetfulness or for mistake due to cross-information indexing.

[0005] Another method for tracking ingestible products consumed is recording the consumed information on a piece of paper. Often, this information is written on a note pad, on a loose piece of paper, on a napkin, etc., and placed at some convenient location. Other times, the paper with the consumed information is pegged on a pegboard or is placed on a refrigerator door via a magnet.

[0006] Although some aspects of the prior art methods for recording information may be, to some degree, effective, a more reliable method is desired that eliminates the risk of misplacement of information or cross-information. In addition, an apparatus and method for facilitating tracking ingestible products consumed is desired.

SUMMARY OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0007] The present invention specifically addresses and alleviates the above-mentioned deficiencies associated with the prior art methods. More particularly, the present invention facilitates recording by incorporating a template for recording an ingestible product consumed comprising a recordable surface for recording information about the ingestible product, the template being positioned on a periphery of a container, the container comprising a closed end and an open end comprising a removeable lid, a label attached to the periphery of the container, the label comprising information about a product brand and about the ingestible product; and wherein the template occupies a region on the periphery of the container separate from the area on the label comprising the product brand.

[0008] The present invention may further be characterized as a method for recording ingestible products consumed comprising providing a template on a periphery of a package or a container containing an ingestible product; the template comprising a recordable surface for recording ingestible product consumed; ingesting a quantity of ingestible product by a first individual; recording at least the quantity ingested or a time the quantity was ingested on the template for the first individual; and recording a time when a next event is to occurred for the first individual.

[0009] A still further aspect of the prevent invention for recording information comprises a template for recording an ingestible product consumed comprising a recordable surface for recording information about the ingested product, the template being attached to a periphery of a package for packaging a container containing an ingestible product, the packaging comprising at least two ends with at least one of the two ends capable of being opened for removing the container, a label attached to the periphery of the packaging, the label comprising information about a product brand and

about the ingestible product; and wherein the template occupies a region on the periphery of the packaging separate from the area on the label comprising the product brand.

[0010] A still further aspect of the present invention comprises a template for recording information about an ingestible product consumed by an individual comprising a writing medium comprising a plurality of sides; the writing medium being positioned on a periphery of a container or on a surface of a package for packaging a container; a plurality of lines printed on the medium, the plurality of lines defining at least one entry field for entry of information about the ingestible product consumed or at least one pre-formatted field comprising at least one printed word, said at least one printed word conveying information related to the ingestible product; and wherein a volume of the ingestible product consumed, a time the ingestible product was consumed, or a name of an individual that consumed the ingestible product is recorded on the at least one entry field.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will be more fully understood when considered with respect to the following detailed description, appended claims and accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0012] FIG. 1 is a semi-schematic perspective view of a packaging material for an ingestible product comprising a template for tracking consumed materials provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 2 is a semi-schematic perspective view of a container containing an ingestible product and having a template for tracking consumed materials provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 3 is an exemplary template for tracking consumed materials provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention;

[0015] FIG. 4 is the template of FIG. 3 with information recorded thereon;

[0016] FIG. 5 is a first alternative template with information recorded thereon provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention;

[0017] FIG. 6 is a second alternative template provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention;

[0018] FIG. 7 is a third alternative template with information recorded thereon provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention;

[0019] FIG. 8 is a fourth alternative template provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention; and

[0020] FIG. 9 is a fifth alternative template provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention comprising a card secured to a container or a package by a pocket.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0021] The detailed description set forth below in connection with the appended drawings is intended as a description of the presently preferred embodiments of various templates for recording ingestible products provided in accordance with practice of the present invention and is not intended to represent the only forms in which the present invention may be constructed or utilized. The description sets forth the features and the steps for constructing and using the templates of the present invention in connection with the illustrated embodiments. It is to be understood, however, that the same or equivalent functions and structures may be accomplished by different embodiments that are also intended to be encompassed within the spirit and scope of the invention. As denoted elsewhere herein, like element numbers are intended to indicate like or similar elements or features.

[0022] Referring now to FIG. 1, a semi-schematic perspective view of a medicine package 10 comprising a template 12 provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention is shown. The exemplary medicine package 10 is a packaging box or housing for a container containing children's medicine, which in the figure shown is a Cold & Cough medicine for children. Similar to conventional medicine packages, the package 10 shown includes a BRAND_x product label and general information about the ingestible product packaged within, such as information regarding treatable symptoms 16, product warning 18, directions 20 for use, active ingredients 22, dose chart 24, etc. Although children's medicine is identified on the cover of package 10, the package may contain other ingestible products, such as liquid cough medicine, prescription drugs,

dietary supplements (in liquid, powder, or pill form), nutritional supplements, vitamins, or any other number of commercially available ingestible products.

[0023] In one exemplary embodiment, the template 12 comprises a recordable surface 26 defined by a plurality of sides and/or edges for recording ingestible product consumed. The sides and edges may include marked lines connoting a boundary or may be a physical boundary, such as a physical edge. As used elsewhere herein, a recordable surface is any surface capable of recording information about the ingestible product. Such information includes information regarding the time the product was consumed, the dosage or volume consumed, the type of product consumed, the name of the individual to be tracked, and/or the next period for taking the ingestible product.

[0024] The template 12 may be a defined region of the package 10, such as a marked or segregated region on the package, a region on the package separated from the product information, or an add-on feature of the package capable of recording information about the ingestible product. An add-on feature may include, but are not limited to, POST-IT® note pads, note pads with perforated tear lines, magnetic magic drawing slate, and magic slate comprising a lift-able plastic film added onto the package 10 for recording information about the ingestible product consumed. If a POST-IT® note pad or a perforated note pad with tear lines is incorporated, one or more sheets representing one or more templates may be used. If more than one sheet is contemplated, two to twenty sheets may be sufficient for recording consumed information for the entire content of the container.

[0025] A template comprising a marked region on the package or a region on the package separated from the product information includes a boundary set off by printed lines, markings, or by distinct separation of the words used to describe the product information. Any appropriate number of pen, pencil, grease pen, or other writing instruments may be used to record information on the template. For example, if a magic slate is used, a stylus would be an appropriate writing instrument.

[0026] Turning now to FIG. 2, a semi-schematic partial perspective view of a container 28 containing ingestible product is shown. The container 28 may be a plastic medicine container or a glass medicine container comprising a closed end 30 and an open end 32 comprising a removeable lid 34. In one exemplary embodiment, the container 28

comprises a label 36 (or two or more labels) attached to the periphery 38 of the container. The label 36 may include labeling information such as a product name, type of ingestible product contained within, information about the ingestible product such as active ingredients, and marketing materials, such as information about the product's improved taste.

[0027] In one exemplary embodiment, a template 12 for recording an ingestible product consumed may be incorporated by including it on the periphery 38 of the container 28. The template 12 may be a designated or separated region of the label 36 comprising a recordable surface 26 or, like the package 10 of FIG. 1, an add-on feature. Alternatively, the template 12 may embody a surface of the container to be recorded directly thereon. Recording on such surface may include the use of a felt-tip pen, either erasable or permanent type, and other pen (such as a grease pen) capable of scribing on glass or other smooth medium.

[0028] Turning now to FIG. 3, an exemplary template 12 comprising an identifier 40 and recording fields 42 on the recordable surface 26 of the template is shown. The identifier 40 may comprise a trademark designating the source, origin, or type of template incorporated or may include printed information about the template, such as instructions for using the template, the medication type or the Brand type the template is designated for, or words describing the purpose of the template. As readily apparent, the identifier 40 may be eliminated altogether or may be printed as part of the label 36 rather than on the template to describe the purpose or source of the template. This option is similar for other templates described elsewhere herein.

[0029] Recording fields 42 may include entry fields 44a, 44b, 44c, etc. for recording, for example, the name of an individual, the dosage consumed by the individual, and the time consumed by the individual. Recording fields may also include pre-formatted fields 46 such as pre-formatted time periods (i.e., AM and PM) and volumetric units (i.e., ml, cc, tsp) for selecting or marking by the recorder. Optionally, a product brand or other information about the ingestible product name may be printed as light background printing directly on the template.

[0030] FIG. 4 depicts the template of FIG. 3 in use. In the exemplary template 12, information about ingestible products consumed by two children, Alex and

Nick, are shown. The template shows that Alex consumed a quantity of ingestible product at 3 PM and Nick consumed a quantity of ingestible product at 4:30 PM. Once the consumed events are recorded, they are crossed out to indicate a completed event. The next scheduled events are then recorded to indicate when the next consuming events will occur. In the example shown, both Alex and Nick are scheduled to consume ingestible products 6 hours after their previous events. As no dosage amounts are recorded on the template 12, it is assumed that both Alex and Nick consumed the same amount. However, if Alex and Nick were to consume different amounts, a notation such as “2 ml” and “1.5 ml” may be added next to the recorded time for the respected children. To conserve space, Alex and Nick, or other individuals to be tracked, may be abbreviated by their first initials: “A” and “N”.

[0031] Turning now to FIG. 5, an alternative template 48 comprising an optional identifier 40 and an array of recording fields 42 on the recordable surface 26 are shown. In the exemplary embodiment, the template 48 does not incorporate pre-formatted fields. Preferably the recording fields 42 are sufficiently large to permit free-hand recording of any information desired by the recorder. In the example shown, the recording fields 42 are recorded with the name and the time a dosage was taken without referencing the dosage. This may be a situation, for example, when only one child is being tracked, the child’s age and weight are known, and the information on the label 36 or package 10 about the ingestible product already contains information about the dosage for a child falling within a particular age and/or weight range. In other words, recording the dosage, if he dosage chart is followed, would be redundant.

[0032] FIG. 6 is an alternative template 50 provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention. The template 50 comprises an optional identifier field 40 and a recordable surface 26 without recording fields 42 or pre-formatted fields 46. In other words, the template 50 may comprise a blank writing surface without the presence of any fields. This template 50 may be desired where, for example, the product is gear towards adults or towards individuals that prefer a free-hand recording approach. In the figure, a free hand approach is selected to record the dosage consumed as well as information about calling a doctor if the individual’s temperature is still high.

[0033] FIG. 7 is yet another alternative template 52 provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention. The alternative template 52 is similar to previous templates described except it has additional pre-formatted fields. In one exemplary embodiment, a dosage field 54 is added to facilitate tracking the dosage consumed by the individual. This template 52 may be particularly useful when two or more individuals are being recorded and the two or more individuals have different requirements. As is readily apparent, more or less pre-formatted fields may be incorporated and the specific pre-formatted information or words on the fields can vary without deviating from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

[0034] The template 52 in FIG. 7 tracks three children (Vic, Alex, and Nick) with each child having different time and dosage requirements. This situation may arise when the multiple children manifest symptoms at different time intervals and are placed on medication at correspondingly different time intervals.

[0035] FIG. 8 shows yet another alternative template 56 provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention. The template comprises a recordable surface 26 comprising a plurality of entry fields 44a-44c, which can vary in number, size, and orientation depending on the designer's choice.

[0036] In another alternative embodiment, an add-on feature, such as a POST-IT® note pad or a note-pad with perforated lines, may comprise multiple sheets corresponding to multiple templates. For example, the note pad may comprise one or more than one of each of the templates shown in FIGs. 3-7 so that as the individual begins his recording, he may tear out (or peel off) a template that he does not want and discard it before beginning recording on a particular template he desires.

[0037] In yet another alternative embodiment, an appropriate writing instrument may be attached, via a clamp bonded to the container or the package, for recording on the template.

[0038] FIG. 9 shows another alternative template 58 provided in accordance with aspects of the present invention. Template 58 resembles a card and is configured to be used with a pocket 60 comprising a receiving cavity 62 attached or bonded to a container or a package. The pocket is similar to conventional pockets and may include printed information thereon about the template or about the ingestible product. The

template 58 may embody a heavy gauge paper and may be laminated or plastic coated. The template 58, and all other templates described elsewhere herein, may incorporate any recording fields and features described for any of the templates elsewhere herein.

[0039] The template 58 may be used by withdrawing it from the pocket 60, record information on one or more recording fields 42, and reinserting the template back into the receiving cavity of the pocket.

[0040] The various templates described elsewhere herein and, if incorporated, the writing instruments may be packaged inside or under the security shrink wrap often found with medicine containers.

[0041] Although the preferred embodiments of the invention have been described with some specificity, the description and drawings set forth herein are not intended to be delimiting, and persons of ordinary skill in the art will understand that various modifications may be made to the embodiments discussed herein without departing from the scope of the invention, and all such changes and modifications are intended to be encompassed within the appended claims. Various changes to the template may be made including manufacturing the dimensions differently, using different fields, using different language to describe the fields or the templates, using different materials, using different coloring scheme, etc. to record ingestible products consumed, mounting or adding a template onto the periphery of the container/package over an portion of a label such that the two overlap, at least partially. Other example of changes may include modifying the way or manner the template is placed on the packaging or the container, varying the location of the template on the package/container such as putting the template at the base of the container (which is also considered a periphery of the container), and changing the type of information recorded on the entry fields or the pre-formatted fields. Accordingly, many alterations and modifications may be made by those having ordinary skill in the art without deviating from the spirit and scope of the invention.